

Public Health Department.

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE HEALTH OF THE

Skelmersdale Urban District

DURING THE YEAR

1943

BY

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Medical Officer of Health.

ORMSKIRK:

T. HUTTON, "THE ADVERTISER" OFFICE, CHURCH STREET, ORMSKIRK.

SKELMERSDALE
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
1943.

Chairman :—ED. DRAPER, J.P.

Vice-Chairman :—W. J. FENNEY.

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T. R. ASPINWALL.

WALTER JAS. BROWN.

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HY. MARSDEN.

WM. SHAW.

JOHN JOS. VEALL.

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JOHN WRIGHT.

WM. G. KEATES.

HORACE HEATON.

J. WATKINSON,

ANNUAL REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Skelmersdale Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1943. In accordance with official instructions, tables of local populations or quotations from the figures supplied by the Registrar General, which may enable any substantial series of local populations to be reconstructed, have been excluded from the Report.

Yours obediently,

(Signed) HERBERT E. MARSDEN,

Medical Officer of Health

August, 1944.

SECTION A. STATISTICS OF THE AREA.

Medical Officer of Health—HERBERT E. MARSDEN,
J.P., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., Barrister-at-Law

(Medical Officer of Health for the West Lancashire Rural
District.)

Sanitary Inspector—G. A. GILL, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Area of District—1,942 acres.

Number of inhabited houses, according to Rate Books at end
of 1943—1,677.

Rateable value—£19,333. Sum represented by a penny rate—
£76. 1. 3.

Skelmersdale is part of the Ormskirk employment area but
no unemployment figures can be given as these are not
available during war-time.

~~EX-AMINER~~
SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1943.

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births (Legitimate)	128	61	57
(Illegitimate)	—	4	—
Stillbirths	2	1	1
Deaths.....	83	50	33

	Deaths
Deaths from Puerperal Causes :—	
Puerperal and Post-abortive sepsis	nil
Other maternal causes	nil
Deaths of Infants under one year of age :—	
All infants per 1,000 live births.....	62
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	56
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	250
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	11
,, ,, Measles (all ages)	nil
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)	nil
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	nil

BIRTHS.

The number of births recorded in the Urban District during the year was 130. This represents an increase of 33 on the figure for 1942, and an increase of 54 on the five years average 1938-1942.

DEATHS.

The total deaths registered in the Urban District during the year numbered 83. Of this number 50 were males and 33 were females. The figure is 7 more than that for 1942 and 1 more than the average for the five years 1938-1942.

There were no deaths during the year due to Zymotic and Epidemic diseases.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

There were 8 deaths of infants under one year which gives an infantile mortality rate of 62 per 1,000 births.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE SKELMERSDALE URBAN
DISTRICT, 1943.

Causes.		Males.	Females.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers.....	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever.....	....	—	—
Scarlet Fever	....	—	—
Whooping Cough	....	—	—
Diphtheria	....	—	—
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	—	—
Other forms of tuberculosis.....	....	—	—
Syphilitic Diseases	....	1	—
Influenza	....	2	1
Measles	....	—	—
Acute polio-myelitis & polio-encephalitis	—	—	—
Acute Inf. encephalitis	....	—	—
Cancer.....	....	7	4
Diabetes	....	—	—
Intra cranial vascular lesions	....	9	6
Heart Disease	....	16	10
Other Circulatory Diseases.....	....	—	—
Bronchitis	....	3	2
Pneumonia	....	2	3
Other respiratory diseases.....	....	—	—
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	....	—	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years) .....	....	—	—
Appendicitis .....	....	—	—
Other digestive diseases	....	—	1
Nephritis	....	—	1
Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	....	—	—
Other maternal causes	....	—	—
Premature birth	....	4	1
Congenital malformation, etc.	....	2	2
Suicide	....	—	—
Road Traffic accidents	....	—	—
Other violent causes	....	—	—
All other causes	—	3	4

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

Total .....	....	7	1
Legitimate .....	....	6	1
Illegitimate .....	....	1	—

SECTION B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Pathological and bacteriological specimens are sent to the appropriate departments of the University of Liverpool, Wigan Infirmary, Southport Infirmary and to Messrs. Evans, Lescher and Webb, Runcorn, for examination.

Chemical analysis of water, when required, is done at Messrs. Evans' laboratories at Runcorn.

Of thirty swabs examined during the year for the presence of *Bacillus Diphtheriae*, all proved to be negative.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

No ambulance is maintained in the township by the Local Authority or otherwise. Nevertheless, the ambulance facilities are completely adequate.

The Ormskirk General Hospital and the Wigan Royal Infirmary take cases from Skelmersdale, and both provide ambulances. The Lancashire Public Assistance Committee also have an ambulance attached to their Hospital at Ormskirk.

The West Lancashire Rural District Council remove infectious cases in their ambulance by contract with the Skelmersdale Council.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The Skelmersdale District Nursing Association is affiliated to the County Nursing Association. Its district includes Burscough Bridge, Lathom, Westhead, Hoscars and Newburgh, all of which townships are in the Urban District of Ormskirk.

The following table gives particulars of the work done in Skelmersdale by the Nursing Association during the year, 1st January, 1943 to 31st December, 1943.

CASES NURSED.					VISITS.				TOTAL.	
Midwifery.	Maternity.	Surg.-ical.	Med-ical.	T.B.	Nurs-ing.	Ante-Natal	T.B.	Cases.	Visits.	
—	—	76	66	—	3487	—	—	142	3487	

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

The Congregational Schoolroom in Witham Road is utilised every Wednesday morning as a Child Welfare Centre and Minor Ailments Clinic, under the direction of the appropriate Department of the County Medical Officer of Health.

An Immunisation Clinic is held every Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock on the same premises by the District Medical Officer of Health.

HOSPITALS: PUBLIC AND VOLUNTARY.

There are no hospitals in the town.

The Ormskirk Public Assistance Hospital, and the voluntary hospitals at Ormskirk and Wigan, provide ample accommodation for medical and surgical cases, and there is a maternity ward at the Public Assistance Hospital.

Infectious cases are admitted to the West Lancashire Rural Council's hospital at Aughton, by agreement with that Authority, whilst smallpox cases go to Liverpool, also by agreement.

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply of water in the district continues to be on the whole satisfactory in quality and quantity. 1652 houses are connected with the main.

The whole of the district is supplied with water by the Southport and District Water Board, from an artesian well, situated at Scarth Hill, in the parish of Lathom.

It was not found necessary during the year to examine the supply, as this is undertaken systematically by the Water Board who send copies of analyses to the Medical Officer of Health.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The district is sewered on the partly separate system. The sewage from approximately 1,137 houses in the principal housing area is discharged by gravity through a 24 inch outfall sewer at the Council's Berry Street Disposal Works and that from 255 houses in this area, by a 15 inch outfall sewer at their Penny Lane Works.

The sewage at both works is treated by settlement and land irrigation, and periodical cleansing and repairs are carried out.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Privy middens—108. No. of closets attached to these middens—141.
 No. of pail closets—29.
 No. of dry ashpits (excluding middens)—3.
 No. of movable ashbins.—1508.
 No. of houses on water carriage system—1652.
 No. of fresh water closets—1504.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The Council now undertake this work by direct labour. The scheme was commenced in July, 1940, and has proved very satisfactory.

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1943.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.	Number of Informal Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by Order of Authority.	TOTAL.
Dwelling Houses and Schools :			
Foul Conditions	3	—	3
Structural Defects	161	—	161
Dairies and Milkshops	—	—	—
Cowsheds	24	—	24
Bakehouses	16	—	16
Ashpits and Privies	3	—	3
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	4	—	4
Water Closets.....	61	6	67
Defective Yard Paving	—	—	—
House Drainage	78	2	80
Water Supply	—	—	—
Animals Improperly kept	—	—	—
Lack of Sanitary Dustbins	44	2	46
Insufficient Closet Accommodation	2	—	2
Smoke Nuisances	2	—	2
Dangerous Buildings	23	—	23
Vermin Infestation	2	—	2
	423	10	433

SCHOOLS

In last year's report it was pointed out that the cloak rooms at the Council's Boys and Girls Schools are too small and should be enlarged so as to provide sinks in the boy's cloak room for washing up purposes in connection with school dinners.

The latter part of the recommendation has been carried out in that one gas boiler, one sink, one towel rail and one cupboard have been provided in the boy's cloak room. Unfortunately the space in the latter has been correspondingly reduced and the necessity for its enlargement is still more urgent.

The Milk in Schools Scheme works very well and it is utilised fully by the scholars. Deliveries of milk are regular and an improvement has been made by the provision of a beaker for each child with a responsible person in charge of the dispensing of the milk.

At the endowed School the Milk in Schools Scheme also works very well and an improvement was the commencement of the school meals service in January, 1944.

A nuisance frequently arises by the use of the school lavatories by the outside public ; this is due to the absence of a wall around the whole school. I am glad to say that the Managers have in hand the erection of a wall round the greater part of the school ; work on this has already begun and will be completed shortly. One part of the school however, will still be open to the public and the use of the children's lavatories by outsiders is still continuing and will of course continue until the whole school is completely enclosed.

The girls playground having a red shale surface becomes very dirty in wet weather.

During the coldest months of the winter the heating apparatus is inadequate, particularly in the infants room where the temperature frequently falls below 50° Fah,

Re-surfacing of the playground at St. Richard's R. C. School is in need of attention, also more playground and cloakroom space is urgently required. The Milk in School Scheme is still obtainable, and with the school meals will show its full value very shortly.

SECTION D. HOUSING

It is unfortunately necessary to again report that there is little prospect of any early amelioration of the existing housing conditions in the area which are steadily deterior-

ating, owing to the difficulty of enforcing major repairs under the Housing Act, in view of the cost of such repairs and the economic value and probable life of many of the houses.

During the year a survey was made and a Preparatory Report issued on the general housing conditions with a view to assessing the probable Post War Housing needs of the township, in which it was estimated that some 379 houses were in need of clearance and a further 313 required major repairs. In view of the time that must elapse before any new construction can take place, it is most probable that these figures will have to be considerably increased.

One of the most important factors preventing the carrying out of extensive works of either repair or reconstruction is the low ratable values and rentals of the properties.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR 1942.

No. of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total (including nos. given separately under (b))....	-
(i) By the Local Authority	-
(ii) By other Local Authorities	-
(iii) By other bodies and persons	-
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :—	
(i) By the Local Authority	-
(ii) By other bodies or persons	-

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	1050
(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose	1408
(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 & 1932	780
(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose	826
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be unfit for human habitation	379
(4) Number of dwelling houses found not to be reasonably fit for human habitation	401

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICE.	—
No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	323
3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR	—
4. PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTIONS 11 AND 13 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936 :—	—
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	—
(2) No. of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	—

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

This Act is now administered by members of the County Medical Officer of Health's Department; the work was previously carried out by the County Police.

During the year the following commodities were surrendered and destroyed:—tinned goods (assorted) 391 lbs., butter, 133 lbs., margarine, 15 lbs., cheese, 73 lbs., onion, 9 cwts.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

At the end of the year there were 112 cows on 8 dairy farms. 9 cowkeepers, and 12 dairymen or milk purveyors.

During the year it was not found necessary to deal with any animals under the T.B. Order of 1938.

Cowsheds are inspected every three months. Their general condition is much improved.

MEAT.

There are no licensed slaughterhouses in the area,

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 6 bakehouses in the town and limewashing is carried out periodically.

SECTION F. INFECTIOUS DISEASES. STATISTICS.

	Smallpox	Enteric Fever.	Scarlet Fever.	Measles.	Diphtheria.	Puerperal Pyrexia.	Erysipelas.	Cerebro-Spinal fever.	Poliomyelitis.	Malaria.	Whooping Cough.	Pneumonia.
Cases .. .	—	—	5	5	1	2	—	1	—	—	1	9
Deaths.. ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7

There were no school closures during the year.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR, 1943.

Notifiable Diseases.	Total Cases at all Ages.	Total Deaths.	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to district	Hospital.									
				Under 1 year	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	5—10	10—15	15—20	20—35	35—45
TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED.													
Scarlet Fever	5						3				
Diphtheria	1										1
Enteric Fever											
Measles	5	1	1	1	1						
Whooping Cough	1					2					
Acute pneumonia	...	6					1						
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	2							2	1	1		
Cerebro-spinal Fever	...	1								1			
Ophthalmia neonatorum	...	1									1		
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	3										2		
TOTALS	25	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	5	3	1

The following table shows the number, monthly distribution, and nature of cases of infectious disease coming under the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during 1943 :—

SUMMARY OF ADMISSIONS TO AND DISCHARGES
FROM THE AUGHTON INFECTIOUS DISEASES
HOSPITAL, 1943.

ADMISSIONS.	Diphtheria	....	....	....	1
	Tonsilitis	....	....	....	1
	Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	....	....	....	1
	Scarlet Fever.....	....	....	....	2
DISCHARGES.	Diphtheria	....	....	....	2
	,, Carriers	....	....	....	2
	Scarlet Fever.....	....	....	....	2
	Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	....	....	....	1
	Tonsilitis	....	....	....	1
	Journeys with ambulance for patient	....	....	....	7
	Journeys with ambulance for bedding	....	....	....	17
	Houses attended for disinfection	....	....	....	10
	No. of times disinfecter was used	....	....	....	8
	Rooms sprayed	....	....	....	14
	Articles stoved	....	....	....	104

TABLE SHOWING INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY
FROM SCARLET FEVER, 1934—1943.

	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Cases	10	9	12	7	10	1	—	4	4	5
Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—

TABLE SHOWING INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY
FROM DIPHTHERIA, 1934—1943.

	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Cases	6	2	1	2	16	2	—	1	4	1
Deaths	—	2	1	2	2	—	—	—	1	—

Particulars of work done in connection with the scheme for Immunisation against Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria since the commencement in May, 1935, to December 31st, 1943.

SCHOOL.	Acceptances.	Total on register	Percentage immunised actually in school.	Immunised against diphtheria only.	4 Injections against Scarlet Fever.	3 Injections against both diseases.	2 Injections against both diseases.	1 Injection against both diseases.	Final Schick test	Schick negative.	Negative after re-test.	Absent or left when results were read.	Later refused treatment.
Council	1935-42 1943	415 39	493 481	43·86	2 315 39	306 —	1 —	1 —	352 35	321 29	20 4	8 1	4 —
Endowed	1935-42 1943	143 18	133 98	66·32	— 106 18	141 —	1 —	— —	127 18	116 15	— 2	10 1	5 —
Methodist	1935-42 1943	150 6	154 150	52·60	1 86 6	124 —	1 —	1 —	156 6	133 6	15 —	3 —	4 —
St. R'ard's	1935-42 1943	188 14	85 123	78·04	6 164 14	164 —	— —	— —	168 14	162 14	2 —	5 —	1 —
Over School age	1935-42 1943	13 —	— —	— —	10 —	2 —	1 —	— —	— —	3 —	2 —	1 —	— —
Under School age	1935-42 1943	230 48	— —	— —	214 —	9 —	34 —	— —	— —	1 —	— —	— —	— —
Hospital Patients.	1935-42 1943	16 —	— —	— —	15 —	— —	9 —	— —	— —	1 —	— —	— —	— —
Totals	1935-42 1943	1155 125	865 818	55·13	248 —	759 77	779 —	3 —	2 —	808 71	734 64	38 6	26 2
Evacuees	1940-42 1943	176 —	59 2	—	6 104 2	116 —	21 —	14 —	59 —	61 —	2 —	2 —	— —

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1943.

Age Periods. Years.	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-1						
1-5						
5-10					
10-15					
15-20					
20-25						
25-35	1	1			
35-45		1				
45-55						
55-65						
65 and upwards						
Totals	2 3	1				

NOTIFICATIONS ON FORM I BY MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HOSPITALS.

Public Assistance and General Hospitals.	Sanatoria and Pulmonary Hospitals
---	--------------------------------------

Pulmonary :—

Males	—	2
Females	1	—

Non-Pulmonary :—.

Males	—	—
Females	—	—

Dispensary and sanatorium treatment for tuberculosis is administered by the appropriate department of the Lancashire County Council.

INFLUENZA AND OTHER RESPIRATORY DISEASES.

There were three deaths from influenza during the year. Five deaths were due to pneumonia.

